

You Drink & Drive. You Lose. National Mobilization **COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNER**

Securing Support in Your Community for the *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* National Mobilization

Publicize What You're Already Doing

As with most States and communities, your community is already engaged in the fight against this deadly crime. By joining the mobilization, you will become part of a powerful force that is reaching millions of Americans through national and local media and the Internet.

And as with any criminal offense, the best way to deter impaired driving is through a highly visible media campaign with the entire community and criminal justice system working together – enforcement, prosecution, adjudications and sanctions – to reinforce the message that violators are criminals and that there is a high risk of being caught, prosecuted and jailed.

You can use existing laws, such as administrative license revocation, .08 BAC, zero tolerance or vehicle confiscation laws, to show the consequences of impaired driving. Prosecutors and judges also can provide the court's perspective and explain what offenders can lose, not only in time away from work but in high fines and court costs.

It Takes a Criminal Justice System Approach

All too often impaired drivers arrive home safely and are never caught or punished for their crimes, which only reinforces future decisions. The key to protecting innocent victims from impaired drivers is to take a systematic approach that includes highly visible and coordinated efforts by criminal justice officials, traffic safety advocates, and private and public partners. The *Saturation Patrols and Sobriety Checkpoint Guide* is a great tool to help you plan and coordinate your efforts (www.nhtsa.dot.gov).

Working With Community Outreach and Advocacy Groups

In most cases, community outreach and advocacy groups are primed and ready to assist law enforcement's efforts. For example, many communities have local MADD chapters that have existing programs and resources available to help you raise awareness about your efforts. MADD can assist you with identifying spokespersons, volunteers for setting up checkpoints or to distribute informational literature to the public. For more information on MADD and local chapters, please visit their web site at www.madd.org.

Working with Judges and Prosecutors

By securing the support of local prosecutors and providing education to judges in advance, you can help ensure that impaired drivers aren't just arrested but also suitably prosecuted and punished for their crimes — the key to developing a strong deterrent message. Showing that the public overwhelmingly supports their actions,



results in fewer dismissals, pleas and appropriate penalties. Judges and prosecutors can make excellent resources and spokespeople for your programs and reinforce that impaired drivers are criminals who will be punished for breaking the law. You can get more information from the National District Attorneys Association web site at www.ndaa-apri.org

Working with Business and Professional Organizations

Beyond the community groups and the judicial system, law enforcement agencies should work to secure the support of local businesses for their efforts. Businesses can distribute information to their employees notifying them of sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols. Talk to human resources managers of local companies about inviting a law enforcement officer to speak with employees on the dangers of impaired driving, how it can affect their work, and how families and friends can join officials to fight this deadly crime.

Professional organizations such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, or the Chamber of Commerce can also provide excellent opportunities to educate the public on your efforts to curb impaired driving. Members of these groups are often opinion leaders within their communities. As partners, they can help give visibility and credibility to your efforts. The National Employers for Traffic Safety web site offers great tips for promoting traffic safety in the workplace (www.netsnational.org).

Consider contacting these groups as well:

- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Restaurants and bars
- Food and beverage retailers
- Beverage distributors.

What is a “Safe Community”?

Everyone wants to live in a safe community, but what can we really do to help? A Safe Community coalition promotes activities to solve local highway and traffic safety and other injury prevention programs. Coalition members can include concerned individuals, law enforcement, public health, medical, injury prevention, education, business, civic and service groups, public works offices, and traffic safety advocates. Members help to identify their community's top safety problems and put together a plan to address these issues. You can find out if there is a Safe Communities program in your area by contacting your regional NHTSA office, or visit NHTSA's Safe Communities site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/safecommunities.

Health Care Professionals, Your Partners on the Front Line

Health care workers can be very effective speakers for your cause. Public health, medical, and health care professionals are often among the first to see the consequences of an impaired driving crash. Work with them to get the word out at speaking engagements, town hall meetings, and news conferences. The Emergency Nurses Association is a great source for information and active in many communities nationwide. Please visit their web site at www.ena.org for more information.

Medical, public health and emergency service organizations for your mobilization may include:

- Local hospitals
- Fire and rescue departments
- Physicians and nurses
- Local health department
- Emergency medical service providers
- Local American Red Cross chapter.

Getting Your Issue Recognized

Generating discussion in your area is critical for creating broad support for your efforts. Hosting town hall meetings, writing letters to the editor of your newspaper, and letter writing campaigns to law makers are just a few ways you can create interest and support. Below are some basic suggestions to help you get started.

Town Hall Meetings

Town hall meetings are a good way to engage the community in a discussion about impaired driving and the need for sobriety checkpoints. Open discussions, like town hall meetings, get the dialogue flowing in your community and help educate people about the dangers of impaired driving, as well as ways you are working to stop it. They can often be organized through existing networks, such as a local Safe Communities coalition.

Meet with your partners to form a task force to choose a date and discuss how you want to plan and publicize your town hall meeting.

The town hall meeting should feature a speaker's panel. Generally, three to five speakers are enough. Each speaker should limit his or her comments to not more than five minutes.

A panel could include any combination of the following:

- The Mayor
- City Council member or County Commissioner
- The heads of law enforcement agencies in your area (Police, Sheriff, Highway Patrol)
- Local and state legislators
- Local reporter
- Members of minority organizations
- Local judge
- Representative from the prosecutor's office
- Member of the Chamber of Commerce
- Local insurance agent
- High school or community drug and alcohol counselor
- The President or Executive Director of a local impaired driving prevention group (MADD, AAA, RID, Safe Communities)

- Local youth organization representative (MADD, SADD, PTA)
- Convicted impaired driver
- Member of the health care community such as a nurse or physician
- Representative from local fire and rescue department
- Victim of an impaired driver

Publicize Your Meeting

The next step is to publicize your meeting date. Encourage the general public to attend. Have each partner invite their associates or members of their organization to make sure that there is a full audience. Partner with local media by inviting a reporter or TV anchor to moderate the meeting. Find out how to go about televising your town hall meeting on your local community or government access station.

A Town Hall Meeting: Impaired Driving – A Deadly & Preventable Crime

[INSERT DATE]

AGENDA

7:00-7:05 pm

Host opens the town hall meeting and introduces each speaker

7:05-7:08 pm

Speaker #1

7:09-7:12 pm

Speaker #2

7:15-7:18 pm

Speaker #3

7:19-7:21 pm

Speaker #4

7:22-7:25 pm

Speaker #5

7:26-7:30 pm

Speech by local government official supporting sobriety checkpoints

7:31-7:45 pm

Questions from the audience

7:45-7:47 pm

Host thanks everyone for attending and officially closes town hall meeting. Speakers should be available for one-on-one interviews with members of the press following the event.

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS:** Each year drunk and drugged driving leads to one death every 30 minutes, one injury every two minutes and 1.5 million arrests nationally; and
- WHEREAS:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has sponsored the *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* National Mobilization to combat this social and criminal national priority; and
- WHEREAS:** The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of sobriety checkpoints in 1990; moreover the decision held that the interest in reducing alcohol-impaired driving was sufficient to justify the brief intrusion of a properly conducted sobriety checkpoint; and
- WHEREAS:** Sobriety checkpoints are proven to reduce impaired driving crashes both by removing impaired drivers from the road as well as deterring others from attempting to drive, and thereby lessen the hazards to innocent people; and
- WHEREAS:** The **(ORGANIZATION)** of **(INSERT YOUR CITY/STATE/COUNTY NAME)** considers its duty to protect our citizens from hazards such as impaired drivers of the highest priority; therefore be it
- RESOLVED:** That the **(CITY/COUNTY)** of **(COUNTY/ STATE)** hereby proclaims support for the *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* National Mobilization during **(INSERT DATES)**; and, hereby proclaims support for the use of sobriety checkpoints as a valuable weapon in the battle against impaired driving and protecting our citizens.

(Governor/Mayor/City Council/County Commissioners)

Date



SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT

[DATE]
[TITLE AND NAME OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE]

Dear Hon. [NAME OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL]:

As a member of our community, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in an important and lifesaving event.

Over the [INSERT HOLIDAY] weekend, [INSERT NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE] is teaming with [INSERT PARTNERS] to set up sobriety checkpoints (or saturation patrols) in our local community to help stop this senseless tragedy. This enforcement period is part of *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* National Mobilization – an energized national effort to reduce the number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities in all 50 states. [THE MOBILIZATION] is scheduled to take place [INSERT DATES].

In order to help achieve this national goal we must redouble our local efforts to stop impaired driving here in [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME]. Last year, there were approximately [INSERT STATISTIC] impaired driving-related driving fatalities nationally, which includes [YOUR STATE OR LOCAL IMPAIRED DRIVING STATISTIC] that occurred in our community.

Sobriety checkpoints are proven deterrents for impaired drivers. Not only can sobriety checkpoints remove impaired drivers from the road at the checkpoint, but just the knowledge that law enforcement is out in full force can deter many from getting behind the wheel while they are impaired.

We ask that you join [INSERT PARTNERS HERE] in showing your support for the *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* Mobilization by [CHOOSE speaking at/attending] our town hall meeting on [DATE] at [LOCATION] at [TIME]. We will be initiating a community-wide discussion on ways to stop impaired driving. [LIST OTHER AGENDA ITEMS AS APPROPRIATE].

If you are unable to [CHOOSE SPEAK AT/ATTEND] the town hall meeting, we would appreciate a letter emphasizing your position on the subject of impaired driving and stating your support for sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols to be read to the audience.

Thank you for your continued efforts to make [COMMUNITY] a safe community. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME HERE]
[YOUR TITLE HERE]
[YOUR ORGANIZATION]
[YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION]

